

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

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FM AMCONSUL VANCOUVER

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3159

INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY

AMCONSUL MONTREAL

AMCONSUL QUEBEC PRIORITY

UNCLAS VANCOUVER 1212

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, CA

SUBJECT: QUEBEC ELECTION: MEDIAR REACTION

1. IN LEAD EDITORIAL ("QUEBECKERS DIDN'T SCARE") OF NOVEMBER 16, VANCOUVER PROVINCE STATES THAT WHILE THE PARTI QUEBECOIS VICTORY WAS BASED ON THE FAILURE OF THE BOURASSA LIBERALS AND NOT ON THE DESIRABILITY OF INDEPENDENCE, LEVESQUE S ELECTION WILL "RIGHTLY SO" SEND "SHIVERS" THROUGH MONEY MARKETS AND MONTREAL S ANGLOPHONE BOARDROOMS BECAUSE A PERIOD OF UNCERTAINTY ABOUT QUEBEC S ECONOMIC FUTURE WILL FOLLOW AND BECAUSE HE AND HIS FOLLOWERS CAN BE EXPECTED TO IMPLEMENT POLICIES SIMILAR TO THOSE OF THE SCHREYER, BLAKENEY AND BARRETT REGIMES.

2. EDITORIAL POINTS OUT, HOWEVER, THAT LEVESQUE WAS NOT ELECTED TO LEAD QUEBEC OUT OF CANADA AND THAT "WILY POLITICIAN THAT HE IS, HE WILL NOT RUSH TO HOLD A REFERENDUM" (ON SEPARATISM) WHEN HE CAN USE THE THREAT OF A REFERENDUM TO DEAL WITH OTTAWA FROM A POSITION OF STRENGTH. PROVINCE BELIEVES THAT IF A REFERENDUM WERE HELD, QUEBECKERS WOULD VOTE TO STAY IN CANADA AND THEN LEVESQUE WOULD HAVE "NO MORE POWER THAN, SAY, THE PREMIER OF BRITISH COLUMBIA."

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3. FOR TRUDEAU, ACCORDING TO THE EDITORIAL, BOURASSA S
DEFEAT OFFERS BOTH A CHALLENGE AND A CHANCE: A CHALLENGE TO
FIND A REPLACEMENT WHO CAN RESTORE THE ALLIANCE OF FRENCH-SPEAKING
QUEBECKERS, ANGLOPHONES AND ETHNIC GROUPS, AND A CHANCE TO
SECURE HIS OWN POSITION AT NEW FEDERAL ELECTION BY CONVINCING
VOTERS THAT HE ALONE CAN SAVE CONFEDERATION BECAUSE HE IS THE
ONLY ONE WHO CAN BARGAIN WITH QUEBEC. "WHETHER HE WILL HAVE
THE HEART FOR IT, OR THE CREDIBILITY, WITHOUT A SECURE POWER
BASE FOR HIMSELF IN QUEBEC, WILL BE THE FASCINATING QUESTION
OF 1976-77."

4. EDITORIAL CONCLUDES BY SAYING THAT QUEBEC ELECTION IS MIXED
BLESSING FOR JOE CLARK AND TORIES: STRONG SHOWING OF UNION
NATIONALE SHOULD MAKE CLARK HAPPY BUT "HE WOULD BE FOOLISH
TO FOREGET THAT THE PQ VOTER IS WELL TO THE LEFT OF THE LIBERALS
AND SO UNLIKELY TO VOTE PC IN A FEDERAL ELECTION."

5. IN PRE-ELECTION EDITORIAL ON NOVEMBER 13, VANCOUVER SUN
OPINED THAT A PQ WIN WOULD NOT BE "A HORRENDOUS CRISIS FOR
CANADIAN CONFEREDATION" BECAUSE PQ HAS PROMISED NO FORMAL
ACTION ON A SEPARATION REFERENDUM FOR TWO YEARS AND BECAUSE
FEWER THAN ONE IN FIVE QUEBECKERS (ACCORDING TO POLLS) FAVOR
SEPARATION. EDITORIAL STATED THAT "CANADIANS ELSEWHERE SHOULD
SHOW FAITH IN THE ABILITY OF THEIR FELLOW CANADIANS IN QUEBEC
TO MAKE THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS WORK FOR THEM... AND IF THEY
ELECT MR LEVESQUE HE WILL KNOW FULL WELL THAT IS IS NOT BECUASE
HE HAS PROMISED TO THROW THE MAPLE LEAVES AND BEAVERS OUT."

6. VANCOUVER PROVINCE GAVE FRONT-PAGE PROMINENCE TO QUEBEC
ELECTION AND CARRIED SPATE OF STRAIGHT NEWS ITEMS THROUGHOUT
MORNING EDITION FROM CP AND SOUTHAM NEWS SERVICE REPORTS
DATE LINED OTTAWA, MONTREAL AND QUEBEC CITY.
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